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Sent: Saturday, February 05, 2022 9:59 AM
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Subject: PSIO SITREP – 5 Feb 2022 – Freedom Convoy Solidarity Activity

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PRELIMINARY INFORMATION ONLY: SUBJECT TO CHANGE AS SITUATION DEVELOPS. INFORMATION MAY BE BASED ON UNCONFIRMED REPORTING.

DATE/TIME: February 5, 2022 @ 1000 hrs

PURPOSE: To provide aggregated situational awareness regarding "Freedom Convoy" solidarity activity impacting Alberta.

BACKGROUND:

- Regional "Freedom Convoy" solidarity convoys (a.k.a. "Operation Bear Hug"), localized highway slowdowns, temporary barricades, and protest activities are anticipated to occur throughout Alberta on 5 Feb 2022.
- "Freedom Convoy" and Public Health Order (PHO) opposition protest activity is expected to converge on the ALBERTA LEGISLATURE around 1300 hrs.
- Significant traffic hazards and disruptions are anticipated on Alberta's Highways, particularly in and around the CITY OF EDMONTON.
- Attempts to resupply and/or reinforce ongoing COUTTS BORDER CROSSING ACTION may occur.
- Temporary convergence on mainstream media facilities has been included in some route planning.
- Root-level organizing is expected to rapidly adapt relative to develop involving the COUTTS BORDER CROSSING and OTTAWA 'Freedom Convoy' activities.
- There are no overt indicators of organized coordination between regional contingents.
- There are no overt indicators of planned violence identified at this time.
- Counter-protest activity may increase potential for confrontations.

CURRENT STATUS:

Coutts Border Crossing

- Transport Canada Civil Aviation, at the request of the RCMP, have issued NOTAMs (Notice to Air Missions) restricting Canadian airspace for ongoing police operations within 5 NM (9.26 km) radius centred on 490014N 1115735W (Coutts Border Crossing) and 490828N 1120452W (Milk River). NOTAMs in effect until Wed 29 Feb.
- As of 14:30 Fri 4 Feb. Flow of US-bound traffic restored after 3 commercial vehicles and 4 pickups blocked Hwy 4 SB traffic at Coutts. Traffic is still impeded south of Milk River at Highway 4 and 501 (about 20 km north of Coutts). While the border is open, traffic is escorted and moving through slowly.
- As of 20:00 Fri 4 Feb. RCMP still managing two illegal protests in the Coutts area. Local and border traffic is flowing slowly in the northbound and southbound lanes and motorists are still asked to avoid the area.
- Unconfirmed social media posts continue to call for more protestors to join the Milk River blockade at the intersection of Highway 4 & 501S at 1200 on Sat 5 Feb.
- RCMP have requested and were granted immediate speed limit reductions on Highway 4 at Milk River. Speeds have been changed to 80km/h then 50km/h as drivers approach the blockade near Milk River.
- RCMP have been prioritizing movement of trucks impacted by the blockade that were transporting livestock or perishable goods. It is believed that all trucks carrying livestock are through the convoy. It is unconfirmed whether any of the remaining impacted transports are carrying perishable goods.
- There are conflicting reports of a Paul Brandt concert at 12:00 on Sat 5 Feb at Highway 4 and Highway 501. A 4 Feb social media posting by Brandt indicates no intention to perform in Coutts area.

Alberta Legislature / McDougall Centre

- RCMP are monitoring all known planned/ongoing protests, convoys, and blockades intending to converge on the Legislature.
- As of 09:37 Sat 5 Feb, Sheriffs report LEG grounds are quiet. No campers, No vehicles. Parking signs are up. 107 Street lot closed. Special duty members on grounds at 9:30 and being briefed. Road blocks will up at 1030 or sooner if required. Approximately 30 Sheriffs on campus today. Sergeant at Arms has 9 members inside the Legislature.
- Sheriff operations will close the entrance to the government centre at: 107 Street at 99 Avenue; 6 Avenue at 106 Street; Fortway Road at River Valley Road. These road closures will be in place for Saturday and may not conclude until Sunday evening.
- Unconfirmed online sources indicate counter-protesters intend to attend north side of Legislature grounds at 10:00 hrs. EPS report interaction with counter-protester on Fri evening, encouraging them to stay away.

City of Edmonton & Environs

- 10:30-18:00 Sat 5 Feb. Edmonton Police Service (EPS) anticipate significant delays on Anthony Henday Drive, Yellowhead Trail, Stony Plain Road, Whitemud Drive, Gateway Boulevard, Walterdale Hill, and Queen Elizabeth Park Road.

- As of 08:23 Sat 5 Feb, Sheriffs report HWY 2 at Leduc closed due to a rolled over semi. Clearance time unknown.
- Sheriffs report approximately 450 protesters in the Ponoka area intended to transit HWY 2A; now going to take HWY 2 based on a counter-protest in Maskwacis.

City of Calgary & Environs

- A slow-roll protest will begin at 1200hrs departing from BAKER PART NW and circumnavigate the city via Hwy 201 and Hwy 8.
- A counter protests is anticipated near the Sheldon Shumer Urgent Care centre.

Regional Municipalities / Rural

- On Fri 4 Feb, a 40 km/hr convoy originating in TABER and LETHBRIDGE was intended to transit to WB HWY 3 and NB HWY 2 to OLDS. The 'slow-roll' convoy was intending to depart OLDS at 08:00 hrs on Sat 5 Feb and transit NB HWY2 to EDMONTON. [Unconfirmed]
- As of 0930 Sat 5 Feb, media report a convoy currently transiting NB HWY 2 near Innisfail.
- Online chatter about a possible blockage of Hwy 1 near BROOKS, AB.
- A Fort McMurray-based group intended to depart Fort McMurray at approximately 07:00 hrs to conduct a "slow-roll" through Plamondon, Lac La Biche, Grassland, Athabasca, Red Water, Slave Lake, and Westlock. [unconfirmed]

Ottawa "Freedom Convoy 2022"

- Fri 4 Feb. GoFundMe removed the Freedom Convoy 2022 Fundraiser from the platform, citing violation of their Terms of Service (Term 8, which prohibits the promotion of violence and harassment). An initial $1M was previously released to be used only for participants who traveled to Ottawa to participate in peaceful protest. No further funds will be directly distributed to the Freedom Convoy organizers. Contributions will now be refunded directly to donors.
- Online commentary believed to be associated with convoy leadership have suggested to movement followers that Ottawa Mayor WATSON has forced small businesses to remain closed in an deliberate attempt to starve out truckers by removing access to food, water, medical care and other services.

Other Provinces / National

- *Not assessed at this time.*

MINISTRY UPDATES:

Transportation (TRAN):

- A number of pop-up slow rolling convoys were reported on Fri 4 Feb across the province. Social media indicates intention to continue this activity daily [unconfirmed]
- The department plays only a supporting role in interactions with border crossing or law enforcement decisions. The department, through our regional Highway Maintenance

Contractor, would provide signage and suggest/manage traffic strategies to support the intended actions of law enforcement.

- Trying confirm if Carway is extending hours to match CBSA hours.
- CBSA discussion with USCBP and as a result of current volumes it was determined that the port of Del Bonita would maintain its normal hours of operation. There are contingency plans in place should the protests block the highway over the weekend. There will also be a reassessment of the extended hours into next week and a decision will be made towards the end of the weekend.

Municipal Affairs:

- A request for federal assistance is in process, pursuing provision of equipment and personnel to move approximately 70 semi-tractor trailers and approximately 75 personal and recreational vehicles from the Coutts Border area.
- Effective at 10:00 Sat 5 Feb, the Provincial Operations Centre (POC) will elevate from a Level I to a Level II in response to Canada Freedom Convoy Solidarity Activity. This elevation is in support of the City of Edmonton, who will also be elevating their Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) to a level II. The POC is monitoring various convoy and protest activities.
- At 16:05 4 Feb, the City of Lethbridge stood up their EOC in anticipation of protest activity related the Farmer 4 Freedom social media postings.
- COVID-19 Current State: 32,711 active cases. 1,584 individuals hospitalized. 118 individuals in the ICU. Testing positivity rate is currently 33.6%.

Jobs, Economy, and Innovation (JEI):

- Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters estimate the Coutts blockage affecting about $44 M in Can/US trade per day and vehicle flows of 800 to 1,200 trucks daily. CME anticipating continuing impacts for 1-2 weeks after the blockade ends due to backlogs. CME indicates:
    - Manufacturers use the Coutts border crossing to export their products to the US and beyond and to import critical business inputs. Delays impact productivity for Alberta companies.
    - We were already in a supply chain crisis brought on by floods and pandemic related shortages, this blockade is making a bad situation worse.
    - The blockade has impacts on reputation for individual companies looking to build business relationships with US buyers/partners that depend on ability to deliver in a timely and reliable manner. Reputational impacts may be broader for Alberta and Canada as a US trading partner.
- Industrial facilities in Alberta's Industrial Heartland region report no direct impacts to date.
- Lethbridge Economic Development (LED) has indicated Lethbridge manufacturing plants will be forced to throttle back or cancel production as supplies run out and frontline workers will lose paid hours and shifts as a direct result. LED estimates roughly $3 million a day in economic impact for just Lethbridge due to reliance on road and rail traffic moving through Coutts. Transportation, warehousing and logistics sector in Lethbridge are incurring significant incremental costs as perishable loads are spoiled, drivers are rerouted many kilometers off course and border paperwork rewritten.

Agriculture, Forestry, and Rural Economic Development (AFRED):

- Broader impacts to the food supply chain attributable to the Coutts blockade are unlikely to be measurable for another 1-2 weeks. The effect on Alberta abattoirs will not be felt for 1-2 weeks.
- Grain and other goods are still moving across the border via rail and through alternate ports, though cost increases and delays may be significant.
- Coutts is the only US border crossing in Alberta providing veterinary services required for international / long haul transport of live animals. Alternate border crossings that offer inspection services for live animals, which is the responsibility of USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service include: Kingsgate, BC/Eastport, Idaho (491 km from Coutts); North Portal SK (864 km from Coutts); Emerson MB (1303 km from Coutts); Possibly Regway, SK but this has not been confirmed (792 km from Coutts)
- As of Fri 4 Feb, Canadian Meat Council (CMC) report about 150 loads of meat have not been shipped due to concern that delays at the Coutts border crossing or the additional transport time coupled with potential delays at alternate border crossings will not allow product to reach store shelves with an adequate remaining shelf life or before it spoils (e.g. meat trimmings have only a 5 day shelf life).
    - Most loads are now moving to Del Bonita which is not an authorized inspection port of entry. Loads crossing at Del Bonita must double back to Sweetgrass, on the US side of the Coutts border crossing, for inspection by FSIS/USDA. Sweetgrass inspection office has added extra staff to deal with the backlog.
    - Alternate border crossings for inspection of meat shipments, which is a responsibility of the USDA Food Safety Inspection Service include: Emerson MB (1303 km from Coutts) and Aldergrove BC (1227 km from Coutts).
- Further details on border services for agricultural commodities have been requested from the US Consulate in Calgary.
- Feedlot operators are reporting very serious grain shortages, which started with the drought and is now compounded by the BC floods and the Coutts blockade. Lack of feed and storage is forcing them to ration the feed on site.
    - [redacted] has reported that it is planning to shut down for at least one day next week due to border issues. Inability to ship beef has resulted in reduced storage capacity in processing plants, meaning animals scheduled for slaughter are being held on feed longer than expected.
    - Other meat facilities may also be considering a slow down.
    - The Alberta Cattle Feeders Association, Alberta Beef Producers and Canadian Cattlemen's Association have publically stated their significant concerns with supply chain challenges, including the need to access to feed from the US.
    - Canfax reported that the feedlot inventories are trending less current, meaning that the supply of market-ready fed cattle is growing. Lower fed cattle prices are anticipated next week if processing plants cannot increase harvest rates.
    - YTD total cattle slaughter in Western Canada is running 2.0 per cent below 2021.

ASSESSMENT & STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS:

- Tow truck commitments for commercial vehicles remains a critical resource for resolving non-compliance at Coutts.
- Supporting protest activities from known anti-PHO groups are being organized for the Legislature grounds concurrent with the truck convoys.

FORECAST:

- Attendance is expected to exceed similar events on 29 January due to cumulative support the COUTTS BLOCKADE and OTTAWA FREEDOM CONVOY have received. It is likely that significant traffic impediments will occur, alongside substantial noise and disruption of the EDMONTON CITY CENTRE.

PREPARED BY: Intelligence Bureau, Provincial Security & Intelligence Office (PSIO)

DITRIBUTION.

- **GOA:** *EXEC:* DM//COS//PO COS//PO Issues Manager | *JSG:* MINO COS//DM//ADSG//COS//ADM PSD//ED LEOB//ED PSIO//ED Sheriffs//DIR EM//DIR Int Bureau | *TRANS:* DM//ADM Planning, Procurement & Tech Stds | *MA:* DM | *Health:* DM | *JEI:* DM//ED Industry & Regional Rel. | *AFRED:* DM//ED Food Safety

- **RCMP:** KDEOC//KDCAS

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Classification: Protected A